NJDOT B-12 – DETERMINING ROTATIONAL VISCOSITY OF ASPHALT RUBBER BINDER

A. Scope. This method presents procedures for sampling and testing of asphalt-rubber binder in the field using a hand held portable rotational analog or digital viscometer.

B. Apparatus. Use the following apparatus:

1. **Viscometer.** A hand held high range rotational viscometer. Analog models with indicator needles and scaled dial displays or digital read out viscometers may be used. Analog models that have been found acceptable include Rion Model VT-04E and Haake Model, VT-02. Digital models that have been found acceptable include Haake VT 2 Plus.
2. **Rotor.** A cylinder with a diameter of 24 ± 1.1 millimeters, height of 53 ± 0.1 millimeters, and a vent hole attached to a spindle or shaft with length of 87 ± 2 millimeters that is compatible with the selected viscometer. Acceptable rotors include Rion No. 1, Haake No 1, or an equivalent.
3. **Thermometer.** Digital with metal jacket probe accurate to 1 °F.
4. **Sample Containers.** Clean 1 gallon metal cans with lids and wire bale.
5. **Viscosity Standard Oils.** Fluids calibrated in absolute viscosity centipoise (cP).
6. **Viscometer Holder.** Clean metal container or stand for safely storing the viscometer between tests.
7. **Level Surface.** Level surface not directly on the ground.
8. **Heat Source.** A controllable heat source (i.e. a hot plate, gas stove, or burner) to maintain the temperature of the asphalt-rubber sample at 350 ± 3 °F while measuring viscosity.
9. **Personal Equipment.** Eye protection and heat resistant gloves.

C. Procedure. Perform the following steps:

1. **Calibration of Equipment.** Calibrate the equipment as follows:

   a. Verify the accuracy of the viscometer by comparing the viscosity results obtained with the hand held viscometer to 3 separate calibration fluids of known viscosities ranging from 1000 cP to 5000 cP. The known viscosity value are based on the fluid manufacturer's standard test temperature or based on the test temperature versus viscosity correlation table provided by the fluid manufacturer.

   b. The viscometer is considered accurate if the values obtained are within 300 cP of the known viscosity.

   c. Verify the calibration of the rotational viscometer using viscosity standards before use at each site.

2. **Sampling Asphalt-Rubber Binder.** Provide new sample containers and ensure that they are clean before using. Before sampling, draw at least 1 gallon from an appropriate sample valve on the interaction tank and discard. Then reopen the sample valve and draw at least 3/4 of a gallon for testing.

3. **Preparing Asphalt-Rubber Binder Samples for Testing.** Prepare the asphalt-rubber binder as follows:

   a. Immediately transport the sample to the testing area. Ensure that the testing area is close to the sampling location to reduce the potential for temperature loss.

   b. Set the open asphalt-rubber binder sample container on the level surface on or over the heat source.

   c. To prevent scorching or burning, manually stir the asphalt-rubber binder sample using a metal stir rod or the temperature probe.

   d. Continue stirring until a consistent asphalt-rubber binder temperature of 350 ± 3 °F is achieved. Record the actual test temperature with the corresponding viscosity measurement.

   e. Insert the viscometer spindle and rotor into the hot asphalt-rubber binder sample near the edge of the can. Ensure that the spindle and rotor are not inserted deeper than the immersion depth mark on the shaft and are not plugging the vent hole. During insertion, the spindle and rotor may be tilted slightly to keep the vent hole clear.

   f. Allow the rotor to acclimate to the temperature of the asphalt-rubber binder for approximately 1 minute. During acclimation, stir the sample thoroughly and measure the temperature.

g. Orient the sample and the rotor so that the rotor is near the center of the sample, align the depth mark on the shaft with the asphalt-rubber binder surface, and level the viscometer in order to measure viscosity.

4. Testing. Analog viscometers include a level bubble to help orient the device to ensure that the rotor and shaft remain vertical. Digital viscometers may not include a level bubble. If a level bubble is not included, attach a small adhesive bubble to the viscometer or use a framework with a level bubble.

Test the asphalt-rubber binder as follows:

a. As soon as the viscometer is leveled and the depth mark is even with the asphalt-rubber binder surface, begin rotor rotation. When using a digital viscometer, activate the continuous digital display according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Read and record the peak viscosity value (The peak measurement typically represents the viscosity of the asphalt-rubber binder; report and log that value. As the rotor continues to turn, it "drills" into the sample and spins rubber particles out of its measurement area. This may cause thinning of the material in contact with the rotor erroneously indicating a drop in the apparent viscosity of the asphalt-rubber binder) from the graduated scale labeled with the corresponding rotor number or from the digital display.

b. After completing the first measurement, move the viscometer rotor away from the center of the sample can without removing it from the asphalt-rubber binder sample. Turn off the rotor rotation.

c. Stir the asphalt-rubber binder sample thoroughly.

d. Repeat Steps 1, 2, and 3. Take 3 measurements and average the results to determine the viscosity.

e. Return the viscometer to its holder with the rotor suspended in a suitable solvent. Before using the rotor again, wipe off the solvent and dry the rotor to avoid solvent contamination of the next sample.

D. Calculations. Some meters read in units of mPa·s (0.001 Pascal·seconds) or dPa·s (0.1 Pa·s), while others may read in centipoise (cPs) units. The conversion is 1 Pa·s = 1000 cPs.

E. Report. Include the following items in the report:

1. Date and time sampled.
2. Location of asphalt-rubber binding blending plant.
3. Test temperature and viscosity.
4. Rotor designation.
5. Viscometer model and serial n